

Office 365 goes into public beta

April 18 2011, by Katie Gatto



(PhysOrg.com) -- Microsoft has released its latest product for business, Office 365, into public beta. The program, which is limited in its participants, allows users to try out the new software in exchange for feedback about the software.

So, what is Office 365?

According to the company, it is next-generation cloud productivity

service for businesses of all sizes. What that means is that [Microsoft](#) has brought, Microsoft Office, SharePoint Online, Exchange Online and Lync Online to a constantly updating cloud service. The public beta will allow users in 38 markets and 17 languages to try out the software for the first time. The seems like the service will be mostly geared toward small businesses, since 70 percent of the people who signed up for the limited beta were [small businesses](#).

Office 365 has its own app store, allowing user to add to the functionality as they see fit. This [app](#) store, called The Marketplace, currently has more than 100 apps and 400 professional services available to the users. New apps and services are expected to be added over time.

In conjunction with the public beta of the new service Microsoft has announced a new contest. The contest, named the Office 365: [Ready for Work contest](#), and it is taking place on Microsoft's Office 365 Facebook page. All business that want to enter have to do is share their experiences with the software on the page. The winner, which will be determined by a community vote, will win free access to Office 365 for a year, \$50,000 in advertising and business services, and a Microsoft executive for a day to work at the business or charity of the winners choice.

No word yet on when Office 365 will be out of beta and on sale.

Office 365 promo video

More information: [www.microsoft.com/Presspass/Fe ... /04-17Office365.msp](http://www.microsoft.com/Presspass/Fe.../04-17Office365.msp)

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